



August 4, 2020

The board of directors of the Wisconsin Technology Council, voting unanimously Tuesday, August 4, 2020, resolved to the following:

WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Technology Council was incorporated in 2001 to serve as the non-profit, non-partisan science and technology adviser to the Governor and the Legislature, and;

WHEREAS, the Tech Council has consistently encouraged policies based on sound science; that support high-tech research and technology transfer; and that encourage the growth of Wisconsin's tech-based economy, and;

WHEREAS, the Tech Council has issued position papers in 2020 related to the COVID-19 pandemic in the state, focusing on business reopening strategies and the prospects for the widespread availability of a vaccine, and;

WHEREAS, there is strong evidence that "silent spreaders" – asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic people – are responsible for much of the spreading of the coronavirus, and;

WHEREAS, there is strong scientific evidence that wearing simple masks can help slow the spread of the coronavirus, and that wearing masks can reduce the severity of the disease for those people who are infected even while wearing a mask, and;

WHEREAS, organizations such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, the World Health Organization, the American Medical Association; the American Hospital Association; the Wisconsin Hospital Association; the American Nurses Association and many academic research institutions – including UW Health, the Medical College of Wisconsin and the Marshfield Clinic – support wearing masks to help stop the spread of coronavirus, and;

WHEREAS, there is strong scientific evidence that simple masks can successfully filter out a majority of viral particles released when people breathe, talk, cough or sneeze, which has been shown to reduce serious disease and death in countries and locations where mask-wearing is broadly accepted and utilized, and;

WHEREAS, widespread wearing of masks in Wisconsin would help to avoid a return of the stringent public health safer at home orders that took place in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic in Wisconsin, and;

WHEREAS, the economic health of the state could be dramatically improved by avoiding such safer at home orders in the future, and;

WHEREAS, the widespread wearing of masks – along with other social distancing measures – would hasten the day when capacity limits in public places could be eased, further strengthening the economy, and;

WHEREAS, in the time of a pandemic, a unified message by elected and other public officials on sound public health practices contributes strongly to the chances that the public will adopt the practices, thus increasing the chances that the spread of a pandemic will be slowed and/or stopped, and;

WHEREAS, it is not the role of the Tech Council to comment on the legality or constitutionality of any statute, regulation or emergency order – including the Governor’s Emergency Order # 1 relating to masks that took effect August 1, 2020. However, it is a legitimate role of the Tech Council to evaluate the science behind existing and proposed state policies, and to provide its recommendations to the executive and legislative branches on such;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that – given the current economic damage, health damage and death being caused by the spread of the coronavirus in the State of Wisconsin – the Board of the Tech Council:

1. Endorses the soundness of the science behind the health and safety provisions contained in Emergency Order #1; and
2. Urges our state policymakers to support the wearing of masks under appropriate conditions as outlined in Emergency Order #1 or any similar state or local orders so as to increase the chances that the spread of the coronavirus is slowed, and so that important educational and economic activities may resume at full strength sooner rather than later in Wisconsin.

Respectfully submitted by:



Greg Lynch, chairman
Wisconsin Technology Council



Tom Still, president
Wisconsin Technology Council